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Outer Mongolia

A New Danger Zone in the Far East

BY T. A. BISSON

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Outer Mongolia: A New Danger Zone in the Far East

BY T. A. BISSON

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THE inclusion of Outer Mongolia in the sphere of Japanese activities during the past year has created a new danger zone on the Asiatic mainland. Recent Outer Mongolian border incidents have followed close on the establishment of Japan's control in Manchuria and its gradual but continuous penetration of Inner Mongolia. Along a wide semi-circle the Outer Mongolian frontier has become contiguous with territory which is in effect Japanese. Strategically Outer Mongolia now constitutes an exposed flank of the Soviet Union's military position in the Far East. Moreover, the Mongolian People's Republic, established in Outer Mongolia with Soviet aid in 1921, has always maintained close and friendly relations with the U.S.S.R. Under these circumstances, Moscow has reacted in unmistakable terms to the issues which have developed between "Manchoukuo" and Outer Mongolia.

JAPAN'S ADVANCE IN INNER MONGOLIA

Since the occupation of Manchuria in 1931-1932 Japan has steadily extended its military and political influence south of the Great Wall and westward into Inner Mongolia. The major Japanese advances have been recorded at two separate periods: during the north China hostilities in the spring of 1933, and in the crisis provoked by the Kwantung Army's demands of June 1935. In each case, public attention was centered mainly on the consequences to north China, which included establishment of the "demilitarized area" south of the Great Wall by virtue of the Tangku truce of May 31, 1933 and strengthening of Japanese influence in the north China provinces two years later.¹ Yet at these periods Japan registered equally significant gains in Inner Mongolia.

The Mongolian people are chiefly located in

1. For the Tangku truce, cf. T. A. Bisson, "The New Status in the Pacific," *Foreign Policy Reports*, January 17, 1934, pp. 260-61; for later developments, cf. *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, June 14, 1935.

three regions: western Manchuria; Inner Mongolia, which in 1928 was divided into the four provinces of Jehol, Chahar, Suiyuan and Ninghsia; and Outer Mongolia. Until the Japanese intervention of September 1931, Chinese rule was effectively exercised over the Mongol areas in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. The first stage of Japan's advance into Mongolian territory took place early in 1932, when the western section of Manchuria came under Japanese control. The next step followed in March 1933, when Jehol—the easternmost of the Inner Mongolian provinces—was occupied by Japanese forces. Soon afterward western Manchuria and the northern section of Jehol were reconstituted as the Mongolian province of Hsingan—one of the five provinces of "Manchoukuo." In this province a liberal policy was adopted, including a guarantee against encroachments on Mongol grazing lands by agricultural settlers,² a considerable measure of local autonomy, and extension of support to the Lama priesthood. Thus constituted, Hsingan province was clearly designed to win the support of the neighboring Inner Mongolian princes, as well as the remaining conservative elements in Outer Mongolia. The same purpose was served by Pu Yi's enthronement as Emperor of "Manchoukuo" on March 1, 1934, which held out the possibility of national reunification of the Mongols on the traditional basis of allegiance to a Manchu emperor.³

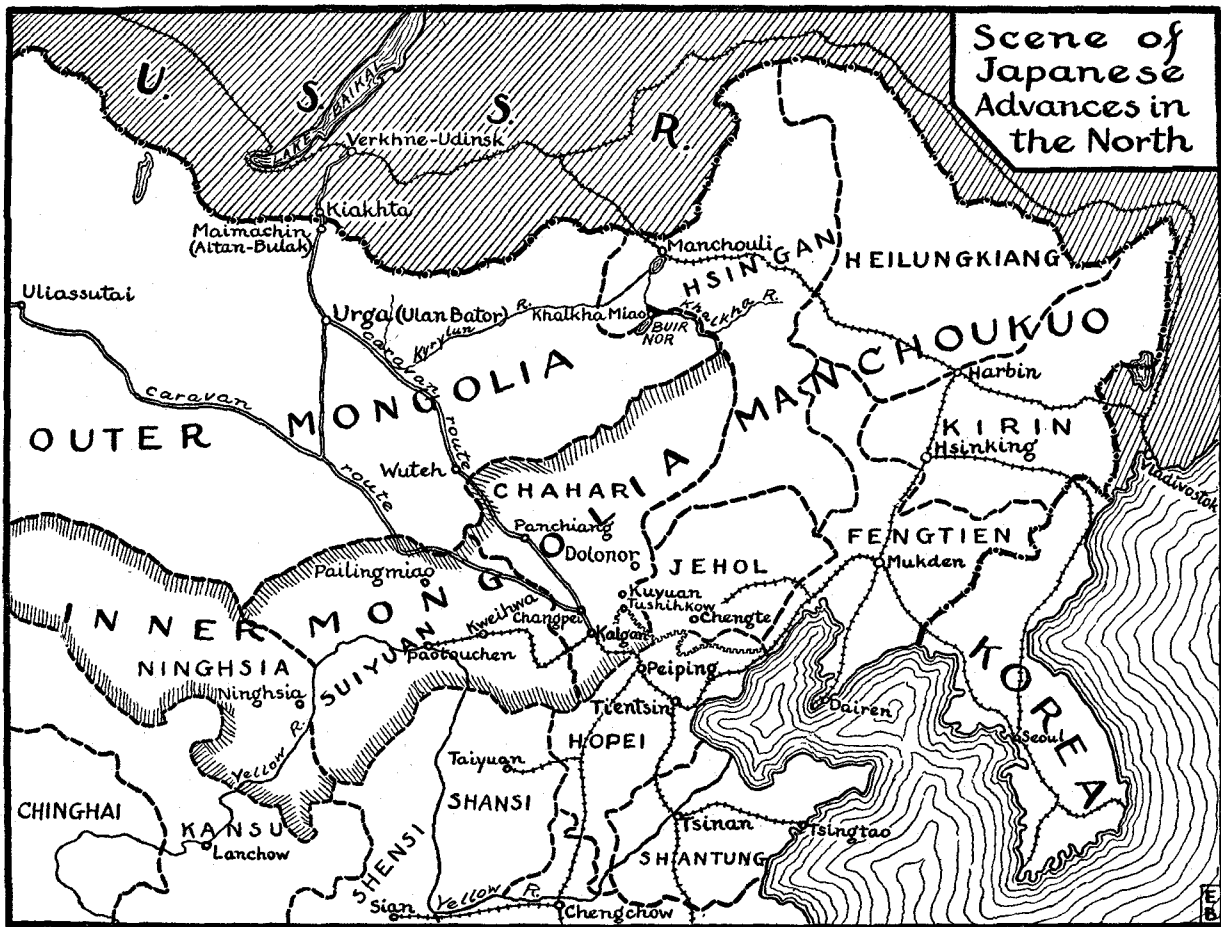
The Inner Mongolian princes made no response to these overtures from "Manchoukuo." Instead they turned Japanese pressure to account by seek-

2. Under pressure from Chinese officials, who were heavily interested in the land deals attending the Chinese colonization movement prior to 1931, many of the Mongol princes had connived at alienation of their pasture lands to agricultural settlers. As a result of this process, the Mongols had lost about two-thirds of their territory in Jehol, about a third in Manchuria, and large portions of Chahar and Suiyuan provinces. Cf. Owen Lattimore, *Manchuria: Cradle of Conflict* (New York, Macmillan, 1935), rev. ed., Ch. VI; also *idem.*, "Mongolia Enters World Affairs," *Pacific Affairs*, March 1934, pp. 19, 23.

3. Bisson, "The Dismemberment of China," *Foreign Policy Reports*, April 25, 1934, pp. 45-46.

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ing political concessions from the Chinese authorities at Nanking. During 1933-1934 an autonomy movement, led by Te Wang (Prince Te) of Chahar, forced the Nanking government to deal with the princes' demands.⁴ On April 23, 1934, after protracted negotiations, an Autonomous Government of Inner Mongolia was established at Pailing-miao in Suiyuan province.⁵ The ruling organ is a Mongolian Political Council of twenty-eight members, assisted by two Chinese councillors. The basic Mongol demand for unification of the Mongolian sections of Chahar and Suiyuan provinces into a separate Chinese province, however, was not realized.⁶ Meanwhile, Chahar province has been subjected to progressive encroachment from "Manchoukuo," directed by officers of the Kwantung Army.

In March 1933, when Jehol was occupied by Japanese forces, a body of troops crossed the border into Chahar province in the region about Dolonor. Control of this city is of great strategic importance, since it commands the routes leading northwest into Outer Mongolia and southwest further into

Inner Mongolia. Manchurian forces, comprising one infantry and one cavalry regiment, have continued to occupy the Dolonor area. These garrison units draw high rates of pay, provided in part by the "Manchoukuo" government, and wear Chinese uniforms of Japanese manufacture. Resident Japanese officials, consisting of the chief of police and a military mission of Kwantung Army officers, describe Dolonor as an independent "special district" under the rule of a Chinese governor. Police, currency, and postal and telegraph services of this district, which embraces an area of some 5,600 square miles, are controlled by the "Manchoukuo" government.⁷

During the past year Japan has rapidly advanced toward complete domination of Chahar. In January 1935 a local dispute developed on the Jehol-Chahar border west of Chengte, the Jehol capital. Charging that the troops under General Sung Chih-yuan, the Chahar governor, had invaded Jehol province in this region, the Kwantung Army headquarters announced on January 18 that it was

4. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

5. For details, cf. *New York Times*, May 27, June 17 and July 29, 1934.

6. Cf. statement by Prince Te, *Christian Science Monitor*, June 1, 1935; also Edgar Snow, "War Brews in Mongolia," *New York Herald Tribune*, October 28, 1934.

7. *New York Times*, February 6, 1935.

"forced to take military action."⁸ On January 23 a force of 2,000 Japanese and "Manchoukuo" troops, using airplanes, armored cars and artillery, launched an attack which speedily carried them into the southeastern corner of Chahar province.⁹ Kuyuan, Tungchatze and Tushihkow, all well within the Chahar boundaries, were bombed by seven Japanese planes. Chinese troops, which offered some resistance, were apparently driven back from the Jehol border to the Kuyuan-Tushihkow line. When fighting was suspended on January 25, the Japanese forces were left in possession of an area in Chahar province totaling approximately 700 square miles, which lay between the Great Wall's northernmost spur and the commonly accepted Jehol border line. At Nanking on January 29 Premier Wang Ching-wei and Mr. Ariyoshi, the Japanese Minister, agreed to settle this issue locally.¹⁰ On February 2 General Sung Chih-yuan's delegates effected a full settlement with the Kwantung Army's representatives in fifteen minutes at Tatang, a small town in western Jehol.¹¹ An official communiqué issued by the Peiping Military Council on February 3, although somewhat ambiguous, would make it appear that the area in dispute was "demilitarized."¹² Later evidence, however, indicates that the territory was in fact incorporated into "Manchoukuo."¹³

The results of the north China crisis of June 1935 undermined Chinese control of Chahar in a number of essential respects. On June 5 four members of the Special Service Corps of the Kwantung Army, allegedly traveling in Chahar without passports, were detained for questioning overnight at Changpei by the local Chinese authorities.¹⁴ The Kwantung Army, on the basis of this "Changpei incident," presented a series of far-reaching demands both locally and at Nanking, backed by menacing troop movements on the Chahar borders.¹⁵ Final settlement of these demands, in which

Major General Doihara played the leading Japanese rôle, was reached at Peiping on June 27.¹⁶ The terms affecting the "Changpei incident" itself called for an apology, dismissal of the Chinese officers responsible for the affair, a pledge that similar incidents should not recur, and a guarantee of free and safe travel for all Japanese in Chahar. Other items included dissolution of Kuomintang branches throughout Chahar, cessation of Chinese emigration into eastern Chahar, and removal of the 132d Division from Changpei—an important junction point on the Kalgan-Urga caravan routes. In addition, the Nanking government dismissed General Sung Chih-yuan from his post as Chahar governor.¹⁷ Finally, a "demilitarized area" embracing Dolonor, Kuyuan, Tushihkow, Huailai and Yen-ching was established in eastern Chahar.

In the course of this affair, Japanese military agents began to exert strong pressure on the Chahar-Suiyuan Mongols, who had failed to respond to previous conciliatory advances. Prince Te, most active of the Mongol leaders, stated in an interview at Peiping on June 1 that Japanese military officers periodically visited Inner Mongolia, suggesting Manchurian and Mongol unity.¹⁸ He declared that a Japanese airplane, bearing a Japanese military representative, had recently landed at Panchiang—his own headquarters in western Chahar situated on the northerly route to Urga. This envoy informed Prince Te that the Japanese desired to build an airdrome near Panchiang, establish a branch of the Kwantung Army's special affairs bureau there, and erect a wireless station; he also submitted a request that the Mongolian Political Council should transfer its capital from Pailingmiao (in Suiyuan province) to Peisiemiao, in the vicinity of Dolonor. In his statement Prince Te insisted that the Mongolian Council, of which he is secretary-general, did not intend to join "Manchoukuo" but aimed to establish a unified Mongolian province within China.

Following settlement of the "Changpei incident," direct Japanese influence on the Chahar administration rapidly strengthened. Kalgan, the provincial capital, had for some time been the seat of a Japanese military mission headed by Colonel

8. *The Trans-Pacific* (Tokyo), January 24, 1935, p. 8.

9. *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, January 24, 1935.

10. *Osaka Mainichi* (English edition), January 31, 1935.

11. *New York Herald Tribune*, February 4, 1935.

12. *China Weekly Review* (Shanghai), February 9, 1935, p. 354.

13. H. J. Timperley, a north China correspondent, writes: "Actually, the affair of last January amounted simply to an enforcement by the Japanese army of its arbitrary designation of the Great Wall at this point as the southeastern boundary of Jehol province. The effect of this action has been to add to Manchoukuo a slice of territory which most maps show as belonging to the Chinese province of Chahar." *Christian Science Monitor*, June 17, 1935.

14. *China Weekly Review*, July 6, 1935, pp. 182-83; *New York Times*, June 13, 1935.

15. *New York Herald Tribune*, June 14, 1935.

16. Official statement issued by Colonel Takahashi, assistant Japanese military attaché in Peiping, *China Weekly Review*, July 6, 1935, p. 183.

17. His place was taken by General Chin Te-chun. In September 1935 General Sung Chih-yuan was appointed Garrison Commander of the Peiping-Tientsin area.

18. *New York Times*, June 2, 1935; *Christian Science Monitor*, June 1, 1935. Japanese agents are also striving to win the confidence of the Lama priesthood in Chahar and Suiyuan provinces. Cf. Hugh Byas, *New York Times*, April 19, 1935.

Gennosuke Matsui.¹⁹ On July 5 a spokesman for the Japanese Embassy at Shanghai revealed that Colonel Matsui had been appointed military adviser to the Chahar government; on July 22 the same source announced the appointment of a Japanese adviser on civil affairs.²⁰ Kalgan occupies the most strategic position in the whole of Inner Mongolia. To the north it is linked with Dolonor and to the east with Chengte, capital of Jehol province.²¹ It dominates the Peiping-Suiyuan railway which runs to Paotouchen, in the heart of Suiyuan province, and thus parallels Outer Mongolia on the south for nearly 250 miles. Troops would be pushed along this line into Suiyuan province should the threatened Japanese action against Chinese Communist forces, which are advancing northward into Kansu and Shensi provinces, prove necessary.²² Kalgan also constitutes the terminus of the overland motor roads from north China to Urga, capital of Outer Mongolia. Recent Japanese military-political activity on these routes has steadily approached the Outer Mongolian border.²³

19. Most of the dozen or more staff officers of the mission, according to a visiting correspondent, speak the Russian and Mongolian languages. *China Weekly Review*, July 27, 1935, p. 282.

20. *New York Times*, July 6, 23, 1935.

21. On September 10 a bus service using Japanese army trucks was instituted between Kalgan and Dolonor. *Ibid.*, September 11, 1935.

22. *Ibid.*, August 18, September 11, October 14, 1935.

23. Japanese activities at Changpei and Panchiang, on the most northerly of these routes, have already been noted. Cf. p. 228. In addition, a Japanese military mission is said to be stationed on this route near Wuteh, a town just across the Outer Mongolian border. *Ibid.*, June 22, 1935.

24. Early reports, emanating from Mukden and Tokyo, said that a surprise attack on a "Manchoukuo" unit of 15 men had resulted in the deaths of a Japanese lieutenant and a Manchurian private. A communiqué issued on January 26 by the Kwantung Army headquarters declared: "The Kwantung Army is fully determined to eliminate all anxiety along the borders. A unit under Major Honda, detailed to reconnaissance at the Khalkha tombs, was suddenly fired upon by Mongolian soldiers and was compelled to return the fire. Reinforcements have been dispatched. This incident was plainly caused by a violation of borders by Outer Mongolian troops and by their aggressive attitude. Full responsibility for the affair rests with them." *New York Times*, January 26, 1935; for a fuller Japanese version, cf. *Japan Weekly Chronicle*, February 7, 1935, p. 172.

A statement by Premier Gendun of the Mongolian People's Republic, however, which appeared on the following day, asserted that on January 24 the leader of a detachment of Mongolian guards noticed at "two kilometers from the frontier in the Khalkhin Sume district 17 armed persons who had crossed the frontier from the Manchurian side. These persons attempted to seize and carry off Dondup, commander of the detachment, who had gone to question them. When Dondup offered resistance, he was severely wounded and died on the spot. In the subsequent skirmish there were losses on both sides." The statement ended with the declaration that "since time immemorial the Khalkhin Sume district had belonged to the territory of the Khalkhask Mongols on which they now live," and that "frontier posts established in that district" had not been changed since the founding of the Mongol state in 1921. *New York*

OUTER MONGOLIAN ISSUES

By the middle of 1935 Japan's occupation of Manchuria and steady penetration of Inner Mongolia had resulted in the encirclement of the eastern and part of the southern borders of Outer Mongolia. Meanwhile, a series of incidents had taken place on the Outer Mongolian frontier which directly involved the Mongolian People's Republic. These incidents occurred on the Mongolian-Manchurian frontier in the vicinity of Lake Buir Nor, situated on the northern side of an Outer Mongolian panhandle which projects into the central portion of western Manchuria. The disputed area centered about Khalkha Miao, a small town on the northeastern shore of the lake.

The first clash at Khalkha Miao, involving Mongolian frontier guards and a small Manchurian force under Japanese command, took place on January 24, 1935. Each side claimed that it had been attacked on its own territory.²⁴ Japanese reinforcements under Colonel Yoshio Wada reached the district on January 30, launched an attack on the Mongolian forces, and took possession of the disputed area.²⁵

Efforts to set up a Mongolian-Manchurian conference for settlement of these incidents were initiated in February,²⁶ but at first proved unsuccessful owing to disagreement as to the scope of the

Times, *New York Herald Tribune*, January 27, 1935; also *Izvestia*, January 27, 1935.

25. According to Japanese reports, the Mongols withdrew with heavy losses after sharp fighting. *New York Times*, January 31, 1935. A communiqué by the Kwantung Army stated that military operations had been rendered necessary by the unwillingness of the Mongols to enter into negotiations for settlement of the dispute. *The Trans-Pacific* (Tokyo), February 7, 1935, p. 10. Senjuro Hayashi, Japanese War Minister, declared before the Diet on January 30 that Mongolian forces had crossed into Manchurian territory in the lake area, an action which "could not be tolerated." *New York Herald Tribune*, January 31, 1935.

These reports were countered by Premier Gendun's second statement, published on February 6, which declared that "the occupation of the Khalkhin Sume district by Japanese-Manchurian troops" was considered "as a violation of the frontiers of the Mongolian People's Republic, as a forceful occupation of a part of our territory." Claiming that the Republic desired to "attain the restoration" of its rights "in a peaceful way," the Premier asserted that the Mongolian guards had withdrawn without offering resistance. He cited documents going back to the eighteenth century by which the early Manchu emperors had fixed the grazing grounds of the Mongols and established Lake Buir Nor and the Khalkha River as belonging to the Khalkhask nomads. He also asserted that the government of the Republic had in no case "refused to accept the emissaries of the Manchurian Government or rejected its official written approach." It "does not object to proving by negotiations with Manchuria," he concluded, "the lack of foundation of any claim" of the latter "to this disputed district." *New York Times*, February 6, 1935; for fuller text, cf. *Daily Worker*, February 6, 1935.

26. *The Trans-Pacific*, February 14, 1935, p. 10.

conference. The Mongolian officials wished to restrict negotiations to the border incidents and delimitation of the frontier, while the Japanese hoped to "open up" Outer Mongolia to the subjects of Japan and "Manchoukuo," particularly for purposes of "travel, residence and business."²⁷ Four months passed before the conference finally met on June 3 at Manchouli, on the northwestern border of Manchuria. A deadlock at once ensued over the Manchurian demand that the discussions should include "all matters of mutual interest."²⁸ The Mongolian delegates claimed that such matters went beyond the conference agenda, and that they were not authorized to discuss them.²⁹

Three weeks later the issues at Manchouli were sharpened by a fresh incident in the Lake Buir Nor region, where a Japanese surveying party was arrested on June 23 by Mongolian frontier guards.³⁰ This incident was taken up on June 27 by Chan Kei, chief of the political section of the "Manchoukuo" Foreign Ministry, who presented a series of demands to the Mongolian delegation which called for the immediate return of the arrested men, an apology by the Mongolian government, and punishment of those responsible.³¹ On receipt of these demands, the Mongolian government directed the head of its delegation to point out that the arrested men had been released after investigation, and further authorized him to propose the establishment of a Manchurian-Mongolian commission to examine border incidents on the spot and to determine conclusively on whose territory the two men had been arrested. If it were established that the incident occurred on Manchurian territory, the Mongolian government expressed its readiness to offer an apology and punish those responsible.³²

This reply, according to a Mongolian communiqué published on July 6, was the prelude to a new series of Japanese-Manchurian demands character-

ized as "entirely unwarranted" and "intolerable."³³ The communiqué claimed that a virtual ultimatum, backed by a threat to demilitarize eastern Outer Mongolia, was contained in a note handed to the Mongolian delegation on July 4 by Chan Kei and Kwantung Army officers. This note, it was said, demanded the right of permanent residence for military observers in Outer Mongolia, the privilege of moving about freely, and permission to run telegraph lines into Mongolia to facilitate their contact with "Manchoukuo." The communiqué concluded with the statement: "Recent events prove that Manchoukuo, with the Japanese army's support, wishes to avoid peaceful settlement of border incidents and to prepare the way for further occupation of our territory." Four days later an editorial in *Pravda*, which reviewed the whole course of the Mongolian-Manchurian controversy, ended with these words: "Japanese militarism in Manchuria undertakes more and more risky adventures. It may happen, however, that the reckless instigators of these adventures will break their necks."³⁴

On July 13 the Mongolian authorities formally rejected the Japanese-Manchurian demands of July 4, on the ground that acceptance would impair the Republic's independence.³⁵ This reply again suggested that a joint Manchurian-Mongolian frontier commission should be established to deal with border incidents. Another crisis in the negotiations developed on July 18, when the Japanese member of the Manchurian delegation presented a demand for the "exchange of resident representatives between Manchoukuo and Outer Mongolia, with freedom of facilities to communicate with their respective governments." Refusal of this demand, a spokesman of the "Manchoukuo" Foreign Ministry declared, would constrain the Manchurian authorities "to request Outer Mongolia to withdraw all troops from the area east of Tomskutsum," a village near Lake Buir Nor.³⁶ This ultimatum, however, was soon withdrawn, and on July 29 Outer Mongolia advanced a counter-proposal which laid the basis for a temporary compromise that postponed settlement of the larger issues involved. The Mongolian authorities agreed to an exchange of resident representatives, but specified that the competence of the representatives should be restricted to the settlement of border disputes and that they should be stationed at prescribed

27. *Ibid.*, February 21, 1935, p. 8.

28. *New York Times*, June 15, 1935.

29. *Pravda*, July 10, 1935.

30. According to Japanese reports, four Outer Mongolian cavalymen fired on a Japanese army surveying party at work in Manchurian territory, kidnapped a Japanese army engineer and a White Russian teamster, and carried off their surveying instruments and horses. *New York Herald Tribune*, June 27, 1935. The Mongolian authorities, however, asserted that the two men had been arrested while making topographical photographs on Mongolian territory, and that the Japanese-Manchurian border guards refused to accept the return of these men after they had been investigated. Only on repeated insistence and not until after June 28, it was claimed, did the Manchurian guards consent to accept the arrested men and their belongings, for which an official receipt was given the Mongolian border authorities. *New York Times*, July 7, 1935; *Pravda*, July 10, 1935.

31. *Pravda*, July 10, 1935.

32. *New York Times*, July 9, 1935.

33. *Ibid.*, July 7, 1935.

34. *Pravda*, July 10, 1935.

35. *The Trans-Pacific*, July 25, 1935, p. 11.

36. *Ibid.*; also *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, July 19, 1935.

points near the boundary.³⁷ This offer was accepted by the Manchurian authorities on August 16—with the proviso, however, that the number of representatives and their location should be decided at a future session of the Manchouli conference scheduled for early September.³⁸

The conference resumed its sittings on October 2, but soon reached a new deadlock over the underlying issue of opening up Outer Mongolia. While the Manchurian delegation insisted on three representatives from each side posted in the principal cities of each country, the Mongolian members held that one representative stationed near the border would be sufficient. In the middle of October the Japanese again brought strong pressure to bear on the negotiations. A communiqué from Urga, published in the Soviet press on October 19, pointed to a threatened rupture of the negotiations due to “primitive and crude threats” aimed at the Mongols by the Japanese member of the Manchurian delegation. According to this report, the Mongolian delegates had been told that, if they failed to accept the proposed terms, the Japanese and Manchurians “would invade the Mongolian People’s Republic with their own forces penetrating to Ulan Bator, and then settle the question by force.” The communiqué concluded: “This unprecedented method of international negotiations has occasioned great indignation in informed Mongolian circles, which expect the Japanese Government to call to order their over-ardent diplomats.”³⁹ When questioned on October 21, the Japanese Foreign Office spokesman neither confirmed nor denied the alleged threats, but did not conceal the fact that the Japanese government approved these efforts to open Outer Mongolia. He declared that “Manchoukuo was now knocking at Outer Mongolia’s door as Commodore Perry knocked at Japan’s door in 1858.”⁴⁰

Japan’s advance into Manchuria and the Inner Mongolian provinces has progressed steadily to the point where Outer Mongolian questions have in turn assumed a critical aspect. The events of 1935 on the Mongolian-Manchurian frontier may well constitute a preliminary testing of strength before the real issue is joined. Under these circumstances, unusual significance attaches to the conditions that prevail within Outer Mongolia, since the strength of the remaining feudal elements that might be

drawn to Japan’s support depends mainly on the extent to which the revolution of 1921 has been consolidated.

FOUNDING OF THE MONGOLIAN PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC

The fall of the Tsarist régime in 1917 rapidly led to the overthrow of Russian dominance in Outer Mongolia.⁴¹ Chinese rule was reasserted in 1919-1920 by General Hsü Shu-tseng, an ambitious and unscrupulous member of the Anfu clique at Peking which was dominated by Japan.⁴² The restoration of Chinese control, the maintenance costs of Hsü’s troops, and the claims of Chinese firms on old debts, which were ruthlessly enforced, seriously reduced Mongol living standards and led to widespread unrest. General Hsü’s ultimatum demanding cancellation of Outer Mongolian autonomy was accepted on November 16, 1919. Meanwhile, the lower house of the Mongolian parliament had been dissolved for its resistance to the ultimatum, and its unseated members had become a center of the opposition movement. On the night of its dissolution, a secret gathering of revolutionary Mongol leaders established an organization headed by Sukhe-Bator, which became the nucleus of the future Mongolian Revolutionary Peoples party. In the spring of 1920 several of the leaders of this group, including Sukhe-Bator, Bodo and Danzan, entered Soviet Russia to seek support for the revolutionary movement.⁴³

In July 1920, following the downfall of the Anfu clique in Peking, General Hsü was dismissed and forced to withdraw from Outer Mongolia.⁴⁴ After a brief interregnum, his régime was succeeded in February 1921 by that of the White Russian adventurer, Baron Ungern von Sternberg.⁴⁵ Following a period of massacre in Urga, Baron Ungern laid plans for a renewed offensive in Siberia, from which he had withdrawn as an aftermath of the defeat of the White Russian general, Ataman Semenov, in the trans-Baikal area. Ungern’s monarchical philosophy, his connections with the White Russian leaders, and his advocacy of “Pan-Mongolianism” made him a useful tool of Japan, which supplied him with munitions and other material

37. *The Trans-Pacific*, August 15, 1935, p. 11; *New York Herald Tribune*, August 6, 1935.

38. *The Trans-Pacific*, August 22, 1935, p. 13.

39. *New York Times*, October 20, 1935; *Daily Worker*, October 21, 1935.

40. *New York Times*, October 22, 1935.

41. For previous changes in Outer Mongolia’s international status, cf. Vera Micheles Dean, “The Soviet Union and Japan in the Far East,” *Foreign Policy Reports*, August 17, 1932, p. 138.

42. For details of General Hsü’s rule, cf. Robert T. Pollard, *China’s Foreign Relations* (New York, Macmillan, 1933), pp. 119-21, 161-62.

43. A. Mineyev et al., *Agrarny vopros na vostoke* (The Agrarian Question in the East), Moscow, 1933, Chapter 3, A. Kalinnikov, “Agrarian Relations and the Anti-Feudal Agrarian Revolution in Mongolia.”

44. Pollard, *China’s Foreign Relations*, cited, p. 162.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 162-163.

aid from Manchuria.⁴⁶ In the spring of 1921, coincident with a monarchist coup at Vladivostok and renewed White Russian military operations against the Far Eastern Republic, Baron Ungern's newly equipped and strengthened force launched an advance toward Verkhne-Udinsk and Lake Baikal.

Meanwhile, close links had been forged between the active Mongolian revolutionaries and Soviet Russia.⁴⁷ Partisan movements against both Chinese and White Russian troops had developed in sections of central and northern Mongolia. On March 1, 1921 representatives of these partisan groups and several revolutionary organizations met at Kiakhta, in Soviet territory, and formally constituted the Mongolian Peoples Revolutionary party. Twelve days later a Provisional Government was elected, and a program for the overthrow of feudalism in Outer Mongolia was drafted. The partisan movement, which was now partially consolidated under the Provisional Government, captured Maimachin from Chinese forces in northern Mongolia on March 18, 1921, renamed it Altan-Bulak, and transformed it into a base of revolutionary operations. Joint military action of the partisans and Russian Soviet forces, established in April, resulted in the repulse (June 5-8, 1921) of Ungern's advance which threatened the capture of Altan-Bulak.

With the intervention of Soviet Russian forces and the growing strength of the revolutionary-partisan movement, a number of the feudal lords and higher lamas turned against Ungern. An influential feudal prince in western Mongolia staged a coup d'état at Uliassutai which barred Ungern's attempt to join up with White Russian units operating in the region of Kobdo and northern Sinkiang. Soviet Russian forces and the Mongolian partisans captured Urga on July 5, 1921. Succeeding months were occupied in cleaning up the various White Russian bands scattered over Outer Mongolia. Ungern himself was seized and executed by a partisan force in August. By the end of the year these operations were largely completed and the country united under the Mongolian Peoples Government at Urga, the leaders of which included Danzan and Sukhe-Bator.

The Soviet government, by an agreement signed with the Urga authorities on November 5, 1921, repudiated Tsarist treaties with Outer Mongolia, recognized the Mongolian Peoples Government, and established diplomatic relations with the new régime.⁴⁸ Each party undertook, in Article 3 of

this agreement, to prevent the formation or sojourn of hostile "governments, organizations, groups or individuals" on its territory, as well as the importation or transportation of arms by "organizations struggling directly or indirectly" against either government. The strict application of these undertakings, intended to assure the preservation of the new Outer Mongolian régime and forestall any future attempts to invade the Soviet Union through Outer Mongolia, has in effect closed that country to diplomatic or consular representatives of third powers—a situation which Japan is now seeking to change.

Nearly four years passed before a *modus vivendi* was reached with China. By a treaty concluded with the Chinese government on May 31, 1924,⁴⁹ the Soviet Union recognized Outer Mongolia as "an integral part of the Republic of China," and agreed to "effect the complete withdrawal" of all Soviet troops from Outer Mongolia—a pledge which was fulfilled in 1925.

STAGES OF THE MONGOLIAN REVOLUTION

The course of the revolution in Outer Mongolia may be traced through the progressive modification of the country's feudal structure.⁵⁰ Pre-revolutionary Mongolia was divided into a number of sharply differentiated social, economic and political groups, resting almost entirely on a cattle-breeding economy. The ruling feudal elements, constituting 26 per cent of the population, consisted of the proprietary princes, the noblemen, the Buddhist princes, the lamas and monks, and the *dharkhans*—a group of freedmen relieved of feudal duties. While the lay princes and noblemen made up only 2 per cent of the population, the Buddhist hierarchy and clergy constituted 24 per cent. The powers and rights of the princes, as well as the district bureaucrats chosen from the noblemen, were hereditary. The thirteen reigning princes (*khutukhtus*) of the Buddhist Church were headed by the "Living Buddha" at Urga. The *dharkhans* formed the base of a nascent capitalist class.

The remaining 74 per cent of the population consisted of the *arats*, or individual cattle breeders (33 per cent); the *shabinars*, serfs belonging to the lamaseries (24 per cent); and the *khamdjlgas*, household servants of the secular lords (17 per cent). Exercising a legal monopoly of all pastures,

46. Louis Fischer, *The Soviets in World Affairs* (New York, Cape and Smith, 1930), Vol. II, pp. 535-36.

47. For details of this period, cf. *Agrarny vopros na vostoke*, cited, Chap. 3.

48. *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China, 1919-1929* (Washington, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1929), p. 53.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

50. This section is based mainly on *Agrarny vopros na vostoke*, cited, Ch. 3; for the class divisions in Outer Mongolia, cf. also *China Year Book*, 1928, pp. 373-75, 378.

the feudal lords were able to control the best grazing lands. As a result, the *arats* were restricted to the poorer lands and became virtual serfs attached to the districts of their respective lords. They could be transferred to other secular lords or presented as gifts to the Buddhist lamaseries; they were under the legal jurisdiction of their lord; and were subject to crushing tax exactions. The *shabinars* approximated the position of the *arats*, except that they were subject to the Buddhist princes and lamaseries, the second largest owners of the country's cattle. Some 150,000 *shabinars* in Outer Mongolia were directly controlled by the Living Buddha through the Shabin Department. The *khamdijlgas*, who performed menial labor around their lord's tent and grazed his cattle, were the lowest and most enslaved class of the population.

In addition, the whole feudal economy of Outer Mongolia, prior to the revolution, was subjected to the demands of the world market. Chinese commercial firms, acting as agents for foreign concerns, obtained large amounts of cattle at very low prices through the sale of cheap industrial products from the West.

The condition of the *arats*, *shabinars*, and *khamdijlgas* thus supplied the fuel for an anti-feudal agrarian revolution. This revolution, however, was directed by a group of leaders who lacked maturity, experience and adequate preparation for its tasks. At the same time, the deep-rooted strength of the feudal relations in Outer Mongolia, combined with the country's industrial backwardness, offered stiff resistance to any thoroughgoing efforts to overthrow the feudal system. One of the immediate results of the 1921 revolution, moreover, was the freedom acquired by existing capitalist elements, which resulted in accelerated growth of a previously retarded bourgeois class. These contradictory features of the new era that opened in 1921 serve to explain the successive stages through which the revolution has passed: a struggle between right-wing and left-wing elements, ending with the defeat of the conservatives in 1928; a period of forced socialist development which collapsed in 1932; and retreat to a new economic policy since 1932.

The Attack on Feudalism, 1921-1925. The first stage, from 1921 to 1928, was marked by the gradual overthrow of the feudal system and a bitter struggle with growing capitalist forces, which were supported by the feudal-theocratic elements. Between 1921 and 1925 a steady series of blows was struck at the feudal system. In 1921 transportation duties, formerly exacted from the *arats*, were considerably reduced and applied also to the feudal lords and the lamas. On November 1 of the same

year the powers of the reigning monarch, the Living Buddha, were constitutionally limited. At the beginning of 1922, shortly after the first counter-revolutionary plot, the *khamdijlgas* were enfranchised. The crushing of a second plot in December 1922 provided the occasion for the enactment of a law which amounted to a frontal assault on the whole feudal system. This law abrogated the governing rights of the feudal lords in their districts, enfranchised the *arats*, and partially abolished the taxes exacted from the *arats* by the feudal lords. A third plot, defeated with considerable difficulty in 1923, led to enfranchisement of the *shabinars* and rescinding of the feudal duties exacted by the Shabin Department—the stronghold of feudalism.

These years were also marked by the beginnings of a capitalist development. According to a census taken in 1924, 86.5 per cent of the *arat* households had an insignificant amount of cattle, while 6 per cent had none at all. The *dharkhans* and the upper strata of the *arats*, on the other hand, accumulated more cattle and began to produce for the market, hiring labor under virtually capitalist conditions. The large monastic and princely households were also forced more and more to hire labor, although they still managed to retain certain feudal controls over the *arats*. Under such conditions more than half the poorer *arat* households, unable to exist without outside earnings, had to work either seasonally or permanently for feudal, monastic, or capitalist households. The poorer *arat* was thus squeezed both as serf and laborer, either grazing the owner's cattle for mere subsistence or producing wool for which he received only a pittance.

Of greater significance politically, since it directly affected the governing apparatus, was the accumulation of wealth by the higher state and party officials. High salaries, graft and theft, and the income from cattle which they originally possessed turned many of the officials into merchant-capitalist owners and speculators. As active leaders of the developing capitalist class, these men sought to capture full political control by allying themselves with the feudal-theocratic elements. Their outstanding political leader, Danzan, concentrated in his hands the leading offices of the party and state, and attempted to carry through a counter-revolution with the aid of the Chinese militarists. The struggle against "Danzanism" culminated in August 1924 at the third Congress of the Mongolian Peoples Revolutionary party, which crushed the movement and again raised the question of non-capitalist development.

The year 1924 marked a turning point in the

first stage of the revolution. In the defeat of "Danzanism" the crucial issue of the succeeding period—the struggle against developing capitalism—was clearly foreshadowed. This victory, and the death of the Living Buddha on May 20, 1924, laid the basis for consolidation of the results achieved in the attack on feudalism. In June 1924 Outer Mongolia was declared a republic and supreme power was vested in a Great Huruldan (Peoples Assembly), which was to elect a government. The first Great Huruldan met in November 1924 and adopted a constitution, modeled on that of the Soviet Union, which swept away the feudal political system.⁵¹ Feudal lords, lamas, the exploiters of labor, merchants and usurers were deprived of fundamental political rights. Lands, mineral wealth, forests and waters were nationalized. Church and State were separated, and religion declared the private concern of every citizen. Titles and class distinctions of the lay lords and the sovereign rights of the *khutukhtus* were abrogated. Debts owed to Chinese firms were canceled. All political power, vested in the "laboring people," was to be exercised through the Great Huruldan, which elects the government; through the Small Huruldan, an executive committee of thirty members meeting at least twice a year; and at other times through the latter's presiding committee of five members and the government. Local governing powers were entrusted to the Huruldans of the various towns and district units. The final blow to the feudal political system was delivered in 1925 by the second Great Huruldan, which abolished the Shabin Department and completely freed the *shabinars*.

The Struggle against Capitalism, 1925-1928. Although the political system of Mongolian feudalism was thus overthrown, the economic base of feudalism and the growing capitalist class was not seriously affected. The rate of capitalist development reached its peak during the years 1924-1927. A census taken in 1928 showed that the *arats*, comprising 83 per cent of the population, owned only 45 per cent of the cattle; while the former lords, lamas and the private owners, who constituted 17 per cent of the population, held 55 per cent of the cattle. During and after 1925 the feudal-capitalist bloc was re-established, and soon exerted a stronger influence than ever on government and party institutions. In trade, transportation and industry the right-wing leaders of the party carried out policies which strengthened the trend toward capitalist development. Connections with foreign capitalist

firms widened, anti-Soviet tendencies appeared, and counter-revolutionary plots multiplied. A left opposition, which began to achieve strength within the party in 1927, was persecuted by the right-wing leadership. The "Khudan" opposition groups, however, found support in the growing mass unrest among the *arats*, and the political struggle entered the phase of a broad agrarian anti-feudal revolution.

At the sixth party Congress in June 1928 the left opposition secured a majority, but was outmaneuvered and failed to capture the leadership. The right-wing leaders then proscribed the "Khudan" groups and engaged on a systematic policy of political terrorism. Meanwhile, the rank and file of the party organizations throughout the country were drawn into the struggle against the feudal-official coalition, which was driven to seek assistance from the Kuomintang and Japan. After the sixth Congress, however, broad *arat* support was mobilized behind the left opposition and the ruling official bloc was isolated. The struggle culminated at the end of 1928 in the seventh party Congress, where the right-wing leadership was routed.⁵²

In broad outline, this Congress called for a closer economic union with the U.S.S.R., drafted a program for the anti-feudal agrarian revolution, and sought means to limit the growth of capitalist enterprise. A new tax law annulled all levies on the poor households, lightened the taxes on the middle *arats*, and shifted the major burden to the large private estates. The economic base of feudalism was directly attacked by confiscating the property belonging to former feudal lords, the higher lamas, and officials of the old régime. Of the 729 estates belonging to these elements, 670 were confiscated in the first campaign, and those which escaped untouched were confiscated in later drives. The confiscation and redivision of the lands and cattle were effected through a sharp class struggle between the poor and middle *arats* and hired laborers on one side, and the former secular and religious lords on the other.

Forced Socialist Construction, 1929-1932. Confiscation of the large estates, which gave the poorer *arats* land and cattle, raised the further issue of providing organized methods of using these means of production to best advantage. A policy of collectivization was laid down in 1929 and reaffirmed at the eighth party Congress in 1930, which declared that the realization of socialist construction had become a practical question. On this premise, a drive for immediate wholesale collectivization

51. For text of the constitution, cf. *China Year Book*, 1928, pp. 381-86.

52. For an eye-witness account of this Congress, cf. William F. Dunne, "The Red Tide in Mongolia," *New Masses*, May 1929, pp. 3-5.

was started. Instead of beginning with the simplest forms of association for hay-harvesting, collective pasturing or collective construction of heated cattle sheds, an attempt was made to organize the highest forms of collectives. Of the 52,256 collectives established by November 1, 1931, 5.1 per cent were communes and 70.4 per cent were *artels*,⁵³ while but 24 per cent were the simpler type of association for specific limited tasks. Without a developed transportation system or adequate mechanical equipment, the difficulties of organizing and managing these collectives and of achieving a collective sense of responsibility on the part of their members proved almost insuperable.

An equally ambitious campaign, which struck at the economic base of the most powerful branch of Mongolian feudalism, was launched against the monasteries in 1930. Of 3,300,000 head of cattle owned by the lamaseries, about 2,400,000 were transferred to the poor and middle *arats* and nearly 1,000,000 to the collectives. This campaign was seconded by an appeal to the poorer lamas to return to secular pursuits in exchange for a share in the property of the lamaseries. In response to this appeal, approximately 12,000 poor lamas left the monasteries in 1930. The absence of any educational preparation of the *arats* for this step, the failure to take their religious beliefs into consideration, and in some cases the adoption of forcible administrative measures without the participation and support of the *arats* turned the campaign into a boom-crang. Considerable numbers of the *arats* were completely alienated and joined with the lamas in opposition to the party and government.

Even more serious errors were committed in the field of internal and external trade. The foreign trade monopoly and state regulation of domestic trade, held in abeyance by the conservative leadership up to 1928, were strenuously fostered after 1929. Despite the benefits gained from closer economic association with the Soviet Union, especially in shielding Outer Mongolia from the effects of the depression, the introduction of government controlled trading was advanced much too rapidly. Existing trade channels were destroyed before they could be replaced by new ones, the flow of commodities to the interior was obstructed by inadequate transportation and lack of distributing centers, and in many regions the population began to experience a "commodity hunger."⁵⁴ This com-

modity crisis, which severely affected the *arat* households, proved the decisive factor in leading to a new shift of basic policy in 1932.

The New Economic Policy, 1932—In July 1932 the plenum of the Mongolian party's central committee instituted a series of measures roughly comparable to the moderate N.E.P. program of the Soviet Union from 1921 to 1928. The bulk of the Mongolian collectives was dissolved by the voluntary action of their members, who distributed the cattle among themselves in proportion to their original contribution. In some cases, the collectives were continued as simple "producing societies" for hay-harvesting, cattle grazing, collective transportation, hunting and fishing, or collective farming. The lamaseries were permitted to regain a considerable portion of their confiscated cattle, which they could retain, sell, or rent to individuals or groups. Tax rates were based on income, and were reduced for *arats* who improved their herds and auxiliary means of production. Profits derived by the *arat* households from trade in cattle, cattle products and handicraft wares were exempted from taxation. This general re-establishment of private ownership was partially counteracted by the enforcement of annual contracts stipulating the wages and hours of all hired labor, as well as certain other conditions.

Foreign trade was still left largely to the state monopoly, with exceptions for certain private firms. Owing to the insufficiently developed cooperative distributing apparatus, private firms and individuals were given the right to distribute goods to the *arat* consumer, and brokers in cattle, raw materials and other products were permitted to operate. Private dealers were also given the right to purchase products directly from governmental and cooperative commercial organizations at wholesale and retail prices, and were accommodated under certain regulations with bank credits. The new laws stimulated transportation by allowing private firms and individuals to establish their own caravans, rent out transport cattle and other facilities, obtain bank credits, hire labor under existing laws, and secure auto trucks. Transportation fees were taxed 5 per cent to establish a road construction fund; and the *arats* were offered lumber free for the construction of wagons.

Private initiative was encouraged in the handicraft industries, for which individual households required no license while small firms paid a nominal license fee and larger firms an additional tax. Private exploitation of extractive industries, such as coal and gold mining, was permitted under certain regulations. Some political rights were

53. Associations for the cooperative use of agricultural means of production, including farm machinery and draft animals.

54. During the 1930-1932 period several thousand discontented persons fled from Outer Mongolia and took refuge in north China. Cf. Owen Lattimore, "On the Wickedness of Being Nomads," *Asia*, October 1935, p. 605.

granted to the private entrepreneurs—merchants, for example, were allowed to vote. In general, the new line of policy was designed to lay the foundations for a gradual transition rather than a headlong advance toward non-capitalist development.

This program has been steadily adhered to since 1932. As a result, there has been a marked increase in the output of the cattle industry and agricultural products, as well as the beginnings of an industrial development. In the north and northwest agriculture has been mechanized through the use of Soviet machinery and the construction of irrigation works. Small-scale industrial enterprises for the processing of livestock products have also been established.⁵⁵ The government's control of key economic positions, such as banking and the foreign trade monopoly, has kept the revival of capitalist enterprise much more effectively within bounds than in the pre-1928 period. The lamas are still entrenched religiously and economically, but their numbers are declining, the new educational program with its network of schools is weakening their religious hold, and their economic activities are being gradually limited. A rapid improvement has occurred in the means of transportation, both in road-building and in the growth of a motor industry, chiefly for the construction of trucks. Expansion of the cooperative distributing apparatus has already reached the point at which collective organization of production is making a new start on sound foundations. This general progress has largely recaptured the allegiance of the *arats*, whose dissatisfaction in 1932 had threatened the foundations of the new order.

CONCLUSION

Mongolia is both a potential battleground and participating factor in the conflict that is maturing in the Far East. International rivalries in this region are complicated by the divergent class interests of the Mongols. The princes and lamas, dispossessed in Outer Mongolia, are still the ruling elements among the Mongols in Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. Since their weakness prevents them from achieving effective independence, their ruling status can only be maintained in association with China or Japan. The Inner Mongolian leagues have seized the opportunity of the present crisis to win political concessions from Nanking, but the history of Chinese encroachment on Mongol pastures does not dispose them to trust China too far. At the same time, their scope for maneuvering is definitely limited by the extent of the Japanese ad-

vance in Inner Mongolia, which is rapidly undermining Chinese control of Chahar and Suiyuan provinces. Faced by a determined Japanese move, the Inner Mongolian princes would probably elect submission to Japan rather than a fight to the death for China.

Japan's program holds out to the princes and lamas the possibility of re-establishing a unified Mongolia under Japanese hegemony. The reservations of the Inner Mongolian princes over the effectiveness of the autonomy they might achieve under Japan's aegis, however, are sufficiently shown by the fact that they turned first to Nanking. Events of the past three years in "Manchoukuo" have strengthened these reservations. The promised Mongol autonomy in Hsingan province has been restricted by the rigid control exercised over the Mongols, the refusal to allow them to bear arms unless actually enlisted in military service, and "the fact that none of the Mongols holding office under Manchoukuo is considered a really capable potential leader by either conservatives or progressives . . ."⁵⁶

In Outer Mongolia the mass of the people are building a new social order in which the former privileges and vested interests of the princes and lamas are being eliminated. This development is based on the Soviet model and is taking place under the guiding influence of the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, as distinguished from Manchuria and Inner Mongolia, the changes in Outer Mongolia are grounded on "a genuinely pro-Mongol intention, and the process of change is in the hands of Mongols . . ." In Outer Mongolia alone both subordinate and high executive positions are held by Mongols, the schools are unmistakably Mongol, and the troops are "Mongol throughout—Russian officers being restricted, by the general testimony even of dissatisfied refugees, to training and teaching functions."⁵⁷

In the critical events which are taking place in Mongolia, the initiative lies with Japan. To the rapid Japanese penetration of Inner Mongolia there has been added, during the past year, the direct efforts to open up Outer Mongolia. For the present, however, the main line of the Japanese advance is into China and Inner Mongolia. Despite the "incidents" on the Outer Mongolian and Siberian borders, no immediate intention of challenging the Soviet Union's position in the Far East appears to exist in Japan outside of chauvinist military circles. How soon such a challenge may develop depends largely on the course of events in Europe.

56. Lattimore, "On the Wickedness of Being Nomads," cited, p. 601.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 605.

55. *New York Times*, October 27, 1935.